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Flaunt Your Frenchness is back

What better way to bone up on your French than to get weekly reminders about how the French have that *je ne sais quoi*?

JANIS WARREN / TRI-CITY NEWS
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Johanne Dumas, Rokia Kone and Mylene Plumier of Société Francophone de Maillardville celebrate the relaunch of Flaunt Your Frenchness. Photograph By JANIS WARREN/THE TRI-CITY NEWS

It's almost back to school time.

And what better way to bone up on your French than to get weekly reminders about how the French have that *je ne sais quoi*?

Besides their beautiful language, francophones enjoy a *joie de vivre* that embraces *la cuisine* and *les beaux arts*, among other things.

Now, a group in the French-Canadian neighbourhood of Coquitlam is rebooting a city campaign that helps residents learn a *peu plus* about the culture and traditions the rest of the world savours.

This summer, the Société Francophone de Maillardville (SFM) revived Flaunt Your Frenchness, a decades-old movement started by the city's then-tourism co-ordinator, Barb Stegemann, Joan McCauley of Place des Arts and SFM's Johanne Dumas.

It was put on the shelf in the lead up to the 2010 winter Olympics "but we didn't despair," Dumas said. "We knew it would come back eventually."

The city agreed for SFM to manage the award-winning campaign and it won a \$60,000 grant from Canadian Heritage (the city continues to hold the trademark).

Since the relaunch on June 24 — Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day — staff have promoted Flaunt Your Frenchness at Canada Day celebrations at Town Centre Park and the Ultimate Car Show at Hard Rock Casino Vancouver, also in Coquitlam.

SFM's Sabrina Cercle said the goal is to get anglophiles turned on to French fun — be it wine and cheese, fashion, film or music and to learn a few idioms along the way. "Everybody has something French they like to do."

This month, SFM will meet with Tri-City educational leaders such as French immersion teachers, Sophie Bergeron (SD43's language, culture and identity co-ordinator) and the local chapter of the Canadian Parents for French to see what can be done in schools to celebrate *toutes les choses francaises*.

"We want to get students involved to create opportunities," Dumas said. "French language and culture go beyond the classroom and it is especially important when you travel to Quebec, France, Africa and other regions."

As well, SFM is working with the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce to create a buzz in the business community, Cercle said.

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